However, during the India Leadership Forum summit 2007 on NASSCOM in Mumbai on 7th to 9th February 2007, Hon'ble Prime Minister has emphasized to set a more ambitious target of US$ 80 billion by 2010.

Telephone connectivity in villages

1812. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of COMMUNI CATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in his Budget Speech 2005-06 the Minister of Finance had promised to give telephone connectivity to the remaining 66,822 villages in the country, and

(b) if so, the number of villages that have been provided with telephones after two years of Bharat Nirman against a target of 66,822 villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Universal Service Obligations Fund (USOF) has entered into a agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Villages Public Telephone (VPTs) in the remaining 66,822 unconnected villages in the country. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/ naxalite infested areas etc. Out of these, 39,741 villages have already been provided with VPTs by BSNL as on 31 st January, 2007. The remaining 27,081 villages will be provided VPTs progressively by November, 2007.

Waiting list of phone applicants

1813. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNI-CATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country where telephone facility has been provided during the last three years till date, State-wise and district-wise;

(b) the number of villages in Himachal Pardesh, which are not having telephone facility;

(c) the details of the waiting list of the applicants for the various services of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited such as Mobile WLL, Landline etc. in Himachal Pradesh;